

Friday, April 23, 2004

Time capsule offers glimpse into 1948 public health

In an October 28, 1948, ceremony, a lead box "time capsule" was placed in a niche behind the cornerstone of the new Indiana State Board of Health's \$2 million building on West Michigan Street in Indianapolis.

The ceremony was a gathering of key dignitaries including Indiana Governor Ralph Gates; State Health Commissioner (and future U.S. Surgeon General) Leroy E. Burney, M.D.; Indiana University School of Medicine Dean John D. Van Nuys, M.D.; and former State Health Commissioner Thurman B. Rice, M.D.

And on April 7, 2004, nearly 56 years later, the contents of the box were revealed to Indiana State Department of Health employees in celebration of National Public Health Week. In attendance this time were State Health Commissioner Greg Wilson, M.D.; Indiana University Department of Public Health Chair Stephen J. Jay, M.D.; and Indiana University School of Medicine Dean D. Craig Brater, M.D.

Nine months earlier, in July 2003, representatives from the State Department of Health and the Indiana University School of Medicine visited the former ISDH building and removed the time capsule.

"Not many people knew that this box existed," Dr. Jay told employees. "We were worried about the safety of the box in the future. No one knows when the building will be razed – it could be years from now. We thought it would be prudent to get it out."

An October 28, 1948, *Indianapolis Star* newspaper gives "an historical view of what was going on at the time," said Dr. Jay.

Among the more than 130 items are: blueprints of the then-new State Board of Health building, bacteriologic specimen transport containers, public health journals, paperclips, various State Board of Health papers and reports, a 1948 Indiana University Football ticket application, rubber tubes (possibly used

Photo by Dan Axler



State Department of Health employees view items from the 1948 time capsule.

for a Bunsen Burner), an Indiana University playbill for *Oklahoma!*, a State Board of Health organizational chart, a number four pencil, a three-cent stamp, the earliest version of adhesive bandages, and a statement on medical ethics.

Two vials of antibiotics, penicillin and streptomycin, with a note questioning whether they would still have antibiotic activity when the time capsule was opened, were also found.

Additionally, 40 "mint" condition slides of the Indiana University Medical Center, and the then-new State Board of Health building were found. Various black-and-white photographs include one of the 1948 version of the "dental mobile," and a van used to make chest x-rays in the screening program for tuberculosis.

Photo by Dan Axler



Stephen Jay, M.D., describes the time capsule contents.

Dr. Jay, Carole Kacius, Ph.D.; and members of the university's Department of Public Health worked to catalog the items. "Dr. Jay was the force behind the effort to uncover the box, and has done an excellent job cataloging the items," said Dr. Wilson. "He's quite a history buff, and that has been an asset to us as we move forward."

While the contents will be initially displayed at the State Department of Health, they will eventually be sent to the Indiana State Archives.

A DVD has been created as an archive, as well.

"The DVD will go into the hands of key archives, such as the Indiana Historical Society, the Indiana University Archives in Bloomington and the Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI) archives," said Dr. Jay. "We wanted to make (the contents) more available to people."

"The thing that struck me when we opened the box is that I originally expected to find a lot of authoritative, official documents in the box," said Dr. Wilson. "And what we really found was a glimpse of the people who provided public health in 1948. They wanted us to

Online quiz aims to educate teens on sex, pregnancy

It's a quiz that could affect how thousands of teenagers view sex – and according to its sponsors, ultimately make them aware that teenage pregnancy *can* happen to them.

"Sex Has Consequences" is the message of the National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy on May 5, which is sponsored by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy with support from *Teen People* magazine and teenpeople.com

The online quiz, available at www.teenpregnancy.org, will place teens in realistic situations and ask them to consider what they would do in "the moment." After taking the quiz, participants are ranked on their awareness based on their answers. Furthermore, they are directed to additional information on preventing pregnancy available on the Web site.

To raise awareness of the quiz, the Indiana State Department of Health is mailing National Day brochures to Indiana middle school and high school principals, local health departments, and Indiana RESPECT (Indiana Reduces Early Sex and Pregnancy by Educating Children and Teens) grantees.

Information will also be included on the State Department of Health's Web site.

"It is our hope that by promoting this day, we will help encourage teens to abstain from sex and avoid teen pregnancy and other serious consequences of sex," said Katherine Newland, Indiana State Department of Health adolescent health coordinator.

"The quiz fits the goals of the State Department of Health's [adolescent health program](#)," Newland said. "We attempt to identify problem behaviors in the adolescent population, and then address those issues."

And one of those issues is teen pregnancy.

"Teen pregnancy can significantly lower the quality of life for a young person and has serious future consequences for the child, the mother, and society in general," Newland said.

"Therefore, it is our mission to raise awareness about this important issue, as well as provide education for teens, parents, and youth-serving professionals across the state," she said. "The National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and the National Day Quiz can certainly assist ISDH with this important task."

February 2002 statistics from the National Campaign to Prevent Pregnancy, show that 11,189 Indiana 15-to-19 year-old

girls gave birth in 1999 – ranking 34th in the nation in that category.

Currently, 35 percent of young women nationwide become pregnant at least once by age 20, despite what the campaign calls "encouraging declines in teen pregnancy and birth rates over the past decade."

"It is our hope that by promoting this day, we will help encourage teens to abstain from sex, and avoid teen pregnancy and other serious consequences of sex."

*--Katherine Newland
ISDH adolescent health coordinator*

According to www.teenpregnancy.org, nearly 300,000 individuals took the quiz last year. Fifty-seven percent of those that took the quiz said that it made the consequences of sex real to them. Seventy percent said the quiz made them think about what they would do in such situations, and nearly half of participants said they would discuss issues raised in the quiz with their friends.

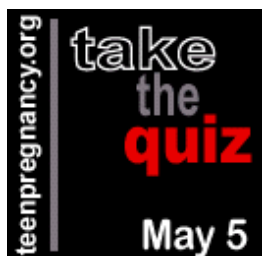


Photo by Dan Axler



A display highlighting the Indiana State Department of Health is featured in the tunnel connecting the Indiana Government Center South, and the Statehouse. It was designed by Dan Axler, Office of Public Affairs, and is part of the Indiana 2016 Task Force's effort to highlight Indiana and its agencies, and to show how they impact the state as a global community.



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National Public Health Week

April 5 - 11, 2004

Photos by Dan Axler



Tom Robinson, Asset Services, is presented with his 30-year service award by Assistant Commissioner Renee Miller at the April 5 employee awards ceremony.



Winners of the Public Health Week trivia contest are (left to right): Marylee Gruver, Acute Care; Phil Zillinger, Labs; and Bethann Wright, WIC. All three correctly answered all of the quiz questions.



The April 6 Employee Booksale raised approximately \$300 for the Employee Incentive Committee. The money will be used for committee initiatives like the year-end bash.

Three honored with STAR Awards



Elaina Ransom

Three Indiana State Department of Health employees were honored by their peers with STAR Awards on April 5, 2004.

State Health Commissioner Greg Wilson, M.D., presented the awards which recognize outstanding employees for Service, Teamwork, Attitude, & Respect.

Elaina Ransom, Children's Special Care, won the Support and Labor, Trades and Crafts category. Ransom was recognized for her willingness to help in any situation and for always going above and beyond the call of duty. And, as one nominee said, "She never says no when asked to do a task." Ransom also was applauded for being supportive to her co-workers. One nomination said, "When Elaina knows that someone is having a problem, she goes out of her way to make sure that she can cheer them up and help them."

Barbara Day, Long Term Care, received the award for the professional,



Barbara Day

administrative, and technological category. Day was acknowledged for doing the work of two employees and for being "the glue that holds things together." It was noted that she is a team player with a great attitude, and someone who has great attention to detail. Day's dedication and hard work, one nominee noted, makes "all of our jobs easier and more enjoyable."

Mary Bisbecos, Indiana Family Helpline, won the supervisor/manager/executive staff category award. As manager of the Indiana Family Helpline, Bisbecos was honored for handling calls with compassion and calmness, and for her professionalism. It was noted that she worked diligently on the AIRS (Alliance of Information and Referral Systems) accreditation, working day and night. She was also applauded for her networking skills, for being flexible and creative, for her dedication, and for "going over and beyond what is expected of her on a



Mary Bisbecos

continual basis."

Other STAR nominees include: Mary Azbill, Acute Care; Phil Beck, Finance; Ray Beebe, Labs; Norma Boykin, Children's Special Health Care; Jerry Clingaman, Weights and Measures; Lisa Combs-Creeh, Immunization; Carolyn Dawson, Finance; Louis Douglas, Labs; Linda Dubak, Long Term Care; Darlene Earls, Acute Care; Cathy Emswiller, Long Term Care; Beverly Faulkner, Long Term Care; Cynthia Grandia, Bio-Terrorism; Harvey Guthery, Acute Care; Connie Harper, Vital Statistics; Deb Hopsecker, Immunization; Murray Lawry, Office of Policy; Marc LoCascio, ITS; Weilin Long, WIC; Sandra Marcum, Long Term Care; John Morse, Acute Care; Brenda Roush, Long Term Care; Sue Percifield, Chronic Disease; Penelope Schreiber, Finance; Vicki Wentworth, Maternal and Child Health; and Kathy Weaver, Office of Policy.

State dental hygienist working to meet needs of Hoosiers

The next time you see Carmine Griffis, State Department of Health dental hygienist, be sure to ask her about her collection of dental art. She'll gladly lead you to her seventh floor desk and show you her bulletin board.

The collection features items like a lion with a perfectly white set of choppers and homemade toothbrush collages.

"I am just glad to see creativity in art amongst all of the clinical trappings of dentistry...and to what lengths the marketing people will go to make even clinical trappings attractive," she said. "And it keeps my PowerPoint presentations more interesting."

After graduating in 1963 cum laude from Indiana University School of Dentistry and getting her license, she went on to get her bachelor's degree in public health from the IU School of Medicine by means of a U.S. Public Health Service traineeship.

Griffis did work in a private dental practice a few years where she liked the one-on-one with her patients. "I once even had a Hollywood actor in my chair," she said.

In 1990, Griffis took her clinical experience and her bachelor's degree, and began to work at the State Board of Health, as it was known then, as a dental hygiene consultant.

"Every day is different," she said. "I'm never at a loss for something to do."

The job allows her the opportunity to reach many more people than she would in a private practice.

And, she said, her position is

administrative, by design.

"Somebody has to have the vision, has to do the coordination, and has to be in charge to meet the needs of Hoosiers in the realm of public health," Griffis said. "Access to care is the biggest need I see in Indiana's oral health care system."

She describes herself as resource person, and a networking entrepreneur, all falling under the umbrella of an oral health

designing brochures, to serving on the Black & Minority Health Fair Planning Committee, to her newest challenge of data gathering. The last four years, she said, have been spent surveying whether or not school children have seen a dentist and have pit and fissure sealants present.

Every February, Griffis sees that information provided by the Indiana

Dental Association on National Children's Dental Month is distributed statewide. She is also always helping promote numerous other dental programs, including sealant usage programs, baby bottle tooth decay prevention programs and P.A.N.D.A. (Prevent Abuse and Neglect through Dental Awareness.) Additionally, Griffis maintains a listing of Indiana Public Health Dental Service Clinics for low income clients. Griffis is also a MARPHLI (Mid-American Regional Public Health Leadership Institute) fellow and has served as a

mentor.

Her "pet" project – one she designed from the ground up – is the "Orofacial Injury Prevention Program." It includes lectures, handouts, posters, displays, a game, and equipment and supplies for mouthguard fabrication programs, all designed by Griffis. It also includes a dental first-aid flip-chart and a sheet on dental emergencies. In 1997, she presented a portion of the program at an American Public Health Association meeting, and she continues to serve as a technical advisor to the Indiana State Medical Association's Commission on Sports.



Photo by Dan Axler

State Dental Hygienist Carmine Griffis enjoys collecting dental artwork.

promotions specialist.

Griffis has definitely reached lots of people with the resource information sent out in oral health "purple packets," through the people she has educated, and the committees on which she has served.

"The biggest part of my job is to sell oral health to the myriad audience," she said. "To quote former U.S. Surgeon General J. Everett Koop, 'You aren't healthy if you don't have good oral health.'"

Her time is split between numerous projects ranging from sending toothbrushes to social workers, to

Time capsule

(continued from page 1)

understand how much dedication, how much commitment, and how much people struggled to improve the health of Hoosiers."

And that is one thing that hasn't changed, Dr. Wilson said. "The dedicated, enthusiastic, and committed group of people are still working in public health."

"I want to thank (ISDH employees) for never losing that vision," said Dr. Wilson. "We still have it and we're still moving on. And hopefully we can say that in another 50 years."

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

► **Heart Alive!** sign-up ends April 30. Sign-up sheets are located in the lobby near the elevators from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., daily. This free program for employees ages 40 and older promotes a healthy cardiovascular lifestyle. Initial screening dates are Monday, May 3 and Thursday, May 6. For more information, contact Keisha Banks at kbanks@isdh.state.in.us.

► State Department of Health employees are invited to participate in **Weight Watchers**. Registration and orientation

for the 13-week series is from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 27 in the Human Resources Training Room on the second floor. The cost of the series is \$120. Two checks can be written for \$60 each at the time of registration. One will be cashed by Weight Watchers immediately, and the other will be cashed in four weeks. Twenty paying members are needed to participate (lifetime members do not count towards the goal of 20 members since they do not pay). For more information, contact Jeanne Hogan at jhogan@isdh.state.in.us.